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REMARKS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY BY
THE HONORABLE HAROLD BROWN
SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
AT THE U.S. NAVAL ACADEMY
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND
WEDNESDAY, MAY 30, 1979

Brown, Harold
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It is a pleasure to be with you today, to welcome a new class of officers to the Navy and Marine Corps. This special day annually renews old naval traditions and celebrates the naval future as that future is reflected in the talent and dedication of today's graduates. Our naval forces have always been, from the first days of the republic, the guardian of our shores, the protector of our commerce, and the first, most visible, and most continuous evidence of U.S. military power throughout the world. The Navy and Marine Corps will continue in these roles so long as this nation remains proud and free.

Perhaps more than any other graduating class, certainly more than any other class since World War II, you begin your service at a time of great challenge. It is this challenge that offers to each one of you--each Ensign and each Second Lieutenant--the opportunity to make a profoundly personal contribution to our country, an opportunity that no other profession offers to its newest members.

In making that contribution, you become a part of the most effective deterrent to war in the world: the Armed Forces of the United States. I speak to you today about a key component of that deterrent--our strategic nuclear capability.

The first priority in defense of the United States is to insure that no nation will be tempted to use nuclear weapons against us, our military forces wherever they may be, or against our allies. The security of the Nation depends on our ability to maintain strategic nuclear forces that can withstand any form of attack and that will enable us to inflict unacceptable damage on an attacker in an assured and controlled way, with the time and manner being at our own option. To this end, we have created a unique set of strategic forces. Their technological sophistication is beyond that of the Soviet forces, and we operate them in some ways the Soviets cannot match. We support our forces with technical intelligence systems superior to any in the world.

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